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Letter dated 4 December 2000 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to resolution 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000, in paragraph 14 of which the Security Council expressed the view that the Governments of Uganda and Rwanda should make reparations for the loss of life and the property damage they had inflicted on the civilian population in Kisangani, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and requested me to submit an assessment of the damage.

Accordingly, as I noted in my fourth report to the Council on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) (S/2000/888, para. 20), I sent a mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 13 to 23 August to assess the loss of life and property damage inflicted on Kisangani as a result of the fighting between Uganda and Rwanda in June 2000.

The mission was led by Omar Bakhet of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and comprised staff from UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and was accompanied to Kisangani by officials of the International Labour Organization and MONUC.

The report, which is contained in the annex to this letter, describes the findings of the team concerning the events in Kisangani, including the fighting which broke out between Ugandan and Rwandan troops in June 2000 and its effects on the population and the infrastructure of the city. It also describes the immediate reaction of the international community, including the humanitarian agencies.

According to the report, over 760 civilians were killed and an estimated 1,700 wounded. More than 4,000 houses were partially damaged, destroyed or made uninhabitable. Sixty-nine schools were shelled, and other public buildings were badly damaged. Medical facilities and the cathedral were also damaged during the shelling, and 65,000 residents were forced to flee the fighting and seek refuge in nearby forests.

The report contains a number of recommendations, primarily relating to the need for additional humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation. I have recommended the implementation to the agencies concerned accordingly.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Report of the inter-agency assessment mission to Kisangani

(Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1304 (2000), paragraph 14)

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1304 (2000), paragraph 14, the Secretary-General dispatched a multi-disciplinary inter-agency team to assess the loss of life and the property damage inflicted on the civilian population in Kisangani, Democratic Republic of the Congo, during the fighting between Ugandan and Rwandan troops which took place from 5 to 11 June 2000. The issue of the reparations for the loss of life and property damage to be made by the Governments of Rwanda and Uganda stated in paragraph 14 of the resolution was outside the terms of reference of this mission. The mission was carried out from 13 to 24 August 2000. The terms of reference for the mission are set out in the appendix.

2. Mission members were selected following consultation with the concerned departments and agencies and were as follows: Omar Bakhet, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (mission leader); Joe Comerford, UNDP; Jamie McGoldrick, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; Frank Sutmuller, consultant; Simon Yazgi, Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The mission was accompanied to Kisangani by Lambert Gbossa, International Labour Organization (ILO) and Alan Lindquist, United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

3. The Kisangani evaluation mission formed two teams from Geneva and New York, leaving on 13 and 15 August, respectively, Mr. Comerford and Mr. Sutmuller having travelled from Geneva.

4. The two teams were due to meet in Kisangani on 19 August 2000, but this did not happen owing to the death of Joe Comerford (of the advance team) in Kisangani. The work of the advance team, to assess structural damage, was halted and the remaining team member was evacuated.

5. Difficulties with flight clearances also delayed the New York team's arrival in Kisangani until 22 August. The current system for flight clearance involves submitting requests at least 48 hours in advance through the Commissaire général, Chargé des affaires de la MONUC. Humanitarian and MONUC flights returning to Kinshasa from rebel-held areas have up until now been required by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to transit via another country, thus increasing costs and delays.

6. The mission reorganized its plans and continued with its investigations. An assessment of structural damage was carried out but it requires expert follow-up to complete the financial costings. The information gathered and assessments made from those investigations have allowed the mission to conclude its preliminary analysis and recommendations.

7. During its visit the mission met with the Minister of Health of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the Commissaire général, Chargé des affaires de la MONUC; Ambassador Kamel Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General; Bouri Sanhouidi, United Nations Resident Coordinator; MONUC; heads and members of all United Nations organizations and bodies active in the country (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), ILO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) and more specifically in Kisangani (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, FAO, UNICEF, MONUC, WHO, WFP); local administrations; international and local non-governmental organizations; civil society members; and representatives of the foreign diplomatic corps in Kinshasa.

8. Access to government sources was affected by two major events that coincided with the mission's visit to Kinshasa: the funeral of a Vice Minister of Finance and the opening of the Constituent Assembly in Lubumbashi meant that many of the Ministers with whom the mission had expected to meet were unavailable.

9. In the week before the full team's arrival United Nations agencies, MONUC, local administration and

international and local non-governmental organizations undertook a considerable amount of preparatory work that contributed to the investigations of the mission. The preparation allowed the mission to focus its work once in the city and make optimal use of the time on the ground. As a result, and despite the constraints, the mission was able to form what it believes is an accurate description of the situation in Kisangani.

10. The mission wishes to express its gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Kamel Morjane; MONUC staff both in Kinshasa and Kisangani; the Resident Coordinator, Bouri Sanhouidi, and the United Nations country team; Congolese officials; non-governmental organizations; and diplomats who met with the mission, and in particular to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, whose in-country facilitation and expertise was invaluable.

II. Summary

11. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is in the throes of a deepening crisis that has, so far, eluded all political and military attempts to solve it. Decades of political and economic mismanagement have resulted in widespread poverty, poor infrastructure and weak and ineffective governmental institutions. The paradox is that these negative development trends are occurring in a country that has immense natural resources. This situation is exacerbated by the direct consequences of a pernicious conflict that has been widely described as "Africa's First World War".

12. As a consequence the country's economy is marked by high unemployment, shrinking production, rampant inflation and monetary instability. The escalating public finance deficit is currently being met by increasing the already heavy foreign debt. Schools and hospitals lack resources and staff, civil servants' salaries have not been paid for many years, and support for basic welfare services is being provided mainly by international aid agencies and hundreds of indigenous humanitarian and church organizations.

13. The recent war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has involved seven neighbouring countries, intensifying the country's already critical socio-economic and political situation. According to the United Nations mid-term review issued in August, this situation has resulted in a major humanitarian crisis currently affecting over 20 million people, including 1.8 million internally displaced people and over 400,000 refugees. Observers suggest the current situation in the country may have serious repercussions on the stability of the entire central African region.

14. The city of Kisangani is one of the worst casualties of the most complex war in Africa. As in the rest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, life expectancy is low and infant mortality rates are high. Access to basic health and welfare services is markedly less than the regional average. Infrastructure is crumbling and much of the country is cut off because of a lack of transport. Preliminary results from recent household surveys in urban areas commissioned by the United Nations indicate poverty and vulnerability to be commonplace.

15. On 5 June, persisting tensions in Kisangani between the occupying forces of Uganda and Rwanda erupted into open and violent conflict, with fighting spreading into residential areas and indiscriminate shelling occurring for 6 days. It was the third and by far the most brutal clash between the two armies battling to control the city, for reasons their leaders could never adequately explain. This has led some observers to suspect that an underlying cause was control of the lucrative diamond industry.

16. Over 760 civilians were killed, and an estimated 1,700 wounded. More than 4,000 houses were partially damaged, destroyed or made uninhabitable. Sixty-nine schools were shelled, and other public buildings were badly damaged. Medical facilities and the cathedral were also damaged during the shelling, and 65,000 residents were forced to flee the fighting and seek refuge in nearby forests.

17. The conflict has intensified the pressure on an already fragile and neglected infrastructure, increasing the hardship faced by the population of Kisangani. The city's electrical supply is tenuous, relying on only one functioning turbine. The water supply is vulnerable as it is dependent on an unreliable electricity supply system. The health centres, already under-equipped and under-funded, have had to cope with the new influx of victims. Transport infrastructure was badly damaged, such as the vital bridge over the Tshopo River that is now in an advanced state of disrepair through over-use by retreating troops and their heavy military trucks and equipment. Landmines were also laid by retreating forces on the bridge and along major routes.

18. Beyond the physical damage, the psychological trauma inflicted on the civilian population by the outbreak of hostilities in Kisangani was immeasurable. Systematic violations of international humanitarian law and indiscriminate attacks on civilians have left residents highly traumatized. Hostilities in June made civilians in Kisangani realize that they were unprotected against such attacks and ill-prepared for the consequences, with very few contingency food items to sustain them through the crisis.

19. The international humanitarian community and its national counterparts mounted an emergency response in the city and surrounding areas. Over 240 tons of relief supplies were airlifted from Kinshasa, Goma and Lubumbashi by the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations. Food and non-food relief items were distributed to the internally displaced persons and affected residents. Congolese medical specialists including surgeons were flown in from the capital to treat the large number of war wounded.

20. While there are some signs that normal life is resuming in the city, large-scale reconstruction of homes and public buildings will be needed before the internally displaced population is confident enough to return to the community. However, it is the uncertain security environment that remains the main obstacle preventing people from resettling into their communities.

21. While humanitarian assistance saves lives and offers grounds for the introduction of confidence-building measures among communities, these interventions are unsustainable. Given the massive logistical and operational costs involved in delivering such assistance by air to locations such as Kisangani and in order to break the cycle of dependency and rebuild self-reliance, rehabilitation support programmes must be implemented.

22. Kisangani offers an opportunity to undertake a series of quick-impact projects to rebuild people's traditional capacities and self-sufficiency in the affected communities. The international donor community must be ready to fund initiatives that stimulate agricultural production and encourage commercial activity through distribution of seeds and tools, food aid programmes supporting public sector staff and their families, and small farmer and microcredit schemes.

23. Such programmes should be targeted so as to meet immediate needs and address the underlying issues of poverty and vulnerability while supporting the peace process.

III. Recommendations

24. Given the precarious security situation in the country, in Kisangani in particular, urgent efforts should be made to strengthen field security in order to provide a safer working environment for all United Nations and international humanitarian workers on the ground, and in line with the recommendations of the recent mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the United Nations Security Coordinator.

25. The search for peace is not dependent on political negotiations alone. The United Nations must continue international dialogue with the current and potential donors on how to support peace-building initiatives within the country.

26. The United Nations must recognize the need for ongoing humanitarian operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the vital importance of ensuring that humanitarian and rehabilitation activities are complementary, reinforcing common objectives of saving lives, rebuilding livelihoods and promoting peace and reconciliation. To this end the United Nations should draw up a country strategy in collaboration with civil society and the non-governmental organizations, aimed at rehabilitation of the communities and at promoting peace and reconciliation.

27. MONUC should continue to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and help to create an environment conducive to the provision of rehabilitation support to war-affected communities.

28. The United Nations should field a follow-up technical mission to Kisangani to obtain detailed costs of the actual damage to houses, public buildings and basic infrastructure identified in this report, and to fulfil all the requirements of paragraph 14 of resolution 1304 (2000).

Supplementary recommendations

29. On the basis of work already being carried out by the United Nations country team, an innovative and

less orthodox approach to the use of humanitarian and rehabilitation support should be attempted, recognizing the complexities of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to reduce the dependency on external assistance and to help create conditions locally for peace and reconciliation.

30. A working group involving key agencies should be established at United Nations Headquarters in New York to support the work of the country team.

31. The international donor community must increase the level of funding for humanitarian assistance as outlined in the consolidated appeals process. However, in Kisangani and elsewhere in the Democratic Republic of the Congo it is imperative to help rebuild people's traditional capacities and self-sufficiency in the affected communities. Such programmes should aim to wean the population from humanitarian aid and establish a sustainable base for rehabilitation, generated at the local level.

32. This would include using food aid to promote agriculture and support staff and their families working in the education and health sectors. It would involve developing close working relations with civil society and local authorities in the implementation of community-based projects, targeting vulnerable groups such as returning internally displaced persons, single-headed households etc.

33. Rehabilitation programmes should adopt a flexible approach that could be phased in and implemented as programmes combining both sustainable development and peace-building initiatives. Kisangani would be viewed as the pilot phase that could then be replicated in other parts of the country and/or region.

34. Major rehabilitation projects are needed to rebuild houses, improve the power supply, water systems and road and bridge infrastructure. Rehabilitation of Kisangani's electricity supply is a priority which should be addressed as a part of a comprehensive reconstruction and rehabilitation plan.

35. Transport routes in the region need to be reopened to facilitate commercial trade and the economic regeneration of Kisangani and other isolated areas. Reopening navigation on the Congo River should be made a country priority, as should the rehabilitation of the railway from Kisangani to Ubundu. The United Nations should monitor and facilitate trade along newly reopened transport routes.

36. Financial facilities for microcredit and farmer credit schemes should be established in order to allow those affected by the conflict to rebuild their livelihoods in a sustainable manner.

37. As well as the physical damage the mission was informed of significant psychological trauma inflicted on the population of Kisangani by the events before and during the fighting in June. The United Nations must address the psychological dimension of this problem when implementing a reconstruction or rehabilitation programme.

38. International organizations should be encouraged to increase their presence in Kisangani and other locations to improve funding, to support the implementation and as a confidence-building measure for the populations at risk.

IV. The context: an overview of the crisis

39. The current crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Zaire, has complex political and socio-economic roots. Since 1998 the country has been the scene of a conflict that has involved seven neighbouring countries, threatens to destabilize the whole of central Africa and has exacerbated the already dire socio-economic and political situation in this former Belgian colony. This has resulted in a division of the country into two zones of influence, preventing a return to a normal political life and the reconstruction of infrastructure and civil society.

40. Several attempts have been made to end the war. After numerous meetings an agreement was signed at Lusaka on 10 July 1999. However, the Lusaka Agreement has been subject to many major breaches caused by fighting between both pro-government forces and rebels, and allies within the factions. A number of high-level diplomatic missions have been undertaken to try to maintain momentum for peace, but they have made little headway.

41. The ongoing armed conflict has prevented any efforts at economic stabilization and growth. Although the Democratic Republic of the Congo has huge potential wealth in the form of natural resources (diamond mines, forests, agriculture, energy etc.), the

economic situation has been in decline since the beginning of the 1960s and the country is today ranked 152 out of 174 in the 2000 UNDP Human Development Index.[1]

42. The country's economic environment is marked by shrinking overall production, rampant inflation, monetary instability and a public finance deficit that is met only by exacerbating the already large foreign debt. Purchasing power has fallen and unemployment is endemic. Increasing numbers of the population are finding themselves economically marginalized.

43. At the same time, humanitarian aid flows have fallen from US$ 269.1 million in 1992, when structural adjustment was halted, to $125.6 million in 1998. This represents a spending of just $6.7 and $2.6 per person respectively. Key indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality rates, nutrition and food security, incidence of disease, literacy rates and access to basic services have all fallen much more slowly than the regional average.[1] Poverty and vulnerability are increasing in a country that has the potential to be one of the world's richest.

44. The humanitarian community faces a series of major obstacles in addressing the needs of the escalating number of vulnerable people requiring assistance. Since the beginning of the year, the United Nations consolidated appeals process mid-term review estimates that the number of war-affected people has risen by around 7 million to 20 million, including 1.8 million internally displaced and 420,000 refugees. Following years of socio-economic degradation, the civil war is creating an increasingly dramatic crisis for vulnerable groups that are virtually cut off from traditional food sources.

45. Access to these vulnerable groups is at best intermittent, owing to the precarious security environment and bureaucratic delays in obtaining travel clearance. The international humanitarian community has access to only 40 per cent of the affected population. Resources are limited and serve less than 600,000 of these people with food assistance, although rudimentary health facilities are thought to be available to over 2 million people. There has been a poor donor response to the 2000 United Nations consolidated appeal, less than 25 per cent having been received to date.

[1] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2000*.

V. Kisangani

46. The city of Kisangani, located in the north-east of the country and at the geographical centre of the African continent, has been the scene of five conflicts in the last four years. The third largest city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and a commercial centre on the Congo River, Kisangani has effectively been cut off from the rest of the country. Trade with Kinshasa has been interrupted and transport on the river is at present only by small boat and canoe. Commerce is almost exclusively with Goma and Rwanda and by air, as all other transport routes are blocked. Where roads are open they are in such bad condition as to make transport by anything but bicycle nearly impossible. Economically, the city is almost totally isolated.

47. The necessity of airlifting supplies into the city has resulted in a general increase in the price of goods with staples such as beans and rice more than doubling.[2] This, in turn, is coupled to a fall in purchasing power, which is estimated by FAO to be less than half of what it was 10 years ago,[3] making many basic goods too expensive for the average person.

48. Kisangani being a city that relied commercially on links with Kinshasa and river transport, the economic repercussions of this isolation have been enormous. Trading, the city's main economic activity, was paralysed; furthermore the increase in imported goods and difficulties in obtaining raw materials and equipment have meant that many of the city's industries have either shut down or greatly reduced their workforce. Sotexki, a textile factory whose staff has fallen from 2,500 to just 130, is a typical example of this. Widespread unemployment, increased prices and a decrease in purchasing power have all contributed to a general rise in poverty within the city.

49. Civil servants have not been paid for years and, should they be paid, they would find that inflation has eaten into their salaries so severely as to make them almost worthless. It is reported that they are

[2] Action contre la faim USA, "Rapport de Mission exploratoire à Kisangani, Province orientale", April 1999.

[3] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Approvisionnement de Kisangani: Situation et actions à envisager", August 2000.

increasingly turning to corruption as a way to make ends meet, further exacerbating problems.

50. Administrative structures have broken down and taxes remain unpaid, consequently there have been years of under-investment in and neglect of local infrastructure. Typical of this is the electrical supply, which is estimated to be less than a third of total demand. Of the three turbines of the city's hydroelectric power station, two date back to 1955 and have been out of action since 1998. The third will stop functioning within 12 months unless spare parts can be obtained. Without electricity the water pumping station will shut down, leaving over 600,000 people without reliable water supplies.

51. A 1999 nutritional study by Médecins sans frontières Holland estimated that 9.1 per cent of children aged 5 and under were suffering from severe malnutrition. Food security in the city has been a problem for some months mainly because the city has been cut off from the surrounding areas that traditionally supply it. There are increasing reports of cases of preventable diseases such as measles and polio, and health centres are poorly equipped and dependent on church groups and non-governmental organizations for the little funding they receive.

52. The city's schools have also been funded through church groups for some years. The higher education facilities, which include a university, higher education colleges and a medical and law school, are for all intents and purposes closed. A whole generation is at threat of growing up illiterate and/or without formal education.

53. Kisangani's situation has been further exacerbated by the recent conflict in which an estimated 720 civilians were killed and 65,000 displaced by fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan troops.

The conflict of 5-10 June 2000

54. Kisangani has been the theatre of several clashes between rebel and government troops[4] and between erstwhile allies according to some observers. The most recent of these occurred from 5 to 11 June 2000, when the city was the scene of fighting between Ugandan and Rwandan troops which included widespread indiscriminate shelling by both sides.

55. Ugandan and Rwandan forces and their affiliated rebel groups vied for control of the lucrative diamond industry centred in the city, with assets being removed and channelled out of the country, ignoring local Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) authorities. In addition, rivalry intensified as parties tried to gain credibility by being the controlling authority in one of the main provincial MONUC locations. Another factor is the strategic position of Kisangani as an entrepôt at the non-navigable rapids between the small river upstream and the large navigable river downstream. Throughout this period, while forces scrambled for control of the city and its resources, the civilian population were terrorized and threatened through the use of radio hate campaigns that attempted to force people to leave the city.

56. Persisting tension between Ugandan and Rwandan troops degenerated into open and violent clashes for the first time in August 1999, the fighting spreading from garrisons and military camps into residential areas of the city. Another round of clashes was prevented from becoming outright war in mid-May 2000 when members of the Security Council's mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUC brokered a ceasefire agreement, including a disengagement plan. However, despite acceptance of the agreement by both the Rwandan Patriotic Army and the Uganda People's Defence Forces and the deployment of additional United Nations military observers, the situation remained highly volatile throughout May, and continued to disrupt economic trade and traditional food supply lines. By the end of the month the humanitarian community negotiated a resumption of air traffic with the belligerents to allow supplies to be flown in, as the city is not accessible by inland transport, thus preventing further deterioration of the population's health and nutritional status.

57. Hostilities once again broke out on 5 June and lasted for six days, killing and wounding numbers of civilians in the indiscriminate bombing by both sides. Losses among the civilian population were high and damage to the city's infrastructure and housing was widespread. Over 760 civilians were killed and an estimated 1,700 wounded. Over 4,000 dwellings were

[4] The taking of the town by the forces of Laurent-Désiré Kabilà upon his rise to power, its capture by RCD and three conflicts between the Ugandan and Rwandan forces — the three-day (August 1999), one-day (May 2000) and six-day (June 2000) wars.

damaged, destroyed or made uninhabitable (see table 1). Sixty-nine schools were partially destroyed or damaged (see table 2), and other public buildings were badly affected. Power stations and the water-supply systems were severely disrupted. The fighting forced some 65,000 residents to flee Kisangani and seek refuge in the nearby forests. Around 3,000 internally displaced people were housed in a camp at Katele.

Table 1
Damage to housing during the war of 5-11 June 2000

	Scale of damage			
Commune	*Destroyed*	*Heavy damage*	*Light damage*	*Total*
Lubunga	34	11	24	69
Kisangani	2	0	0	2
Kabondo	1	0	16	17
Mangobo	30	100	195	325
Makiso	59	642	370	1 071
Tshopo	292	618	1 689	2 599
Total	**418**	**1 371**	**2 294**	**4 083**

Table 2
Damage to schools during the war of 5-11 June 2000

		Scale of damage			
Commune	*Number of students*	*Destroyed*	*Heavy damage*	*Light damage*	*Total*
Lubunga	3 829	0	0	7	7
Kisangani	758	1	1	1	3
Kabondo	4 387	0	3	7	10
Mangobo	5 103	5	4	3	12
Makiso	16 518	2	24	2	28
Tshopo	10 052	1	8	0	9
Total	**40 647**	**9**	**40**	**20**	**69**

Tables prepared from information supplied by United Nations country team and non-governmental organizations.

58. Beyond the physical damage, the psychological trauma inflicted on the civilian population is immeasurable. During the Kisangani hostilities and throughout the war, a hallmark of the crisis has been a blatant disregard for international human rights and humanitarian law. The war has been marked by gross violations of human rights, the civilian populations being offered no protection and intentionally targeted by all sides through widespread atrocities. Ordinary civilians in the city came to realize that they were in a highly vulnerable situation. The latest clash made plain to the people of Kisangani how ill-prepared they were, with very few contingency food stocks and little capacity to sustain them through the crisis, heightening their trauma levels still further.

59. On 5 June, children were in school when fighting broke out. Many were trapped for days inside school buildings, only able to return home to safety during lulls in the shelling. Several school premises were actually used by Ugandan and Rwandan armed forces to launch attacks and as fallback positions. This accounts for the high number of schools damaged during the six-day war. Extensive damage to residential areas caused by the indiscriminate shelling and fighting in residential areas was a clear indication of the blatant disregard by the warring parties for the civilian population.

The humanitarian response

60. The humanitarian response in the aftermath of the Kisangani crisis was an example of good collaboration and coordination by both national and international bodies. Local health personnel with limited means treated the growing number of injured and wounded. National Red Cross Society volunteers were deployed to undertake the first phase of assistance to victims, including first aid, sanitation support, mine and unexploded ordnance awareness campaigns and burials.

61. The International Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins sans frontières provided the necessary medical assistance to the war wounded within hours of the ceasefire on 11 June. On 13 June, the humanitarian community in the Democratic Republic of the Congo mounted a second phase of response, most notably through the Emergency Humanitarian Initiative fund of the United Nations system and the donor community, including the Governments of Belgium, Italy and the United States of America. The United Nations and its non-governmental organization partners, especially Memisa and Catholic Relief Services, organized a major airlift operation between Kinshasa and Kisangani, and between Goma and Kisangani.

62. The United Nations airlift between Kinshasa and Kisangani rapidly brought in stocks (over 120 tons) of emergency supplies, equipment and fuel. Rapid assessments of the internally displaced populations were carried out on all major axes connecting Kisangani with the rest of Orientale Province. Emergency medical assistance and non-food supplies were delivered to internally displaced persons in Kisangani and its environs, and food aid was distributed inside the city. Health centres were reopened and emergency medical services were organized on Kisangani road axes. Comprehensive epidemiological surveillance mechanisms were established for the affected populations. Surgical operations were carried out in the city hospitals of Kisangani with the help of Congolese surgeons brought from Kinshasa.

63. Landmines and unexploded ordnance are still a major impediment to the return of displaced people to their homes and to the resumption of daily life in the city. Mines were laid in strategic military locations to prevent the advance of troops and protect retreating forces. Around 18 mines were placed on the Tshopo bridge, the major link in the city. Reports indicate that some mines were laid after the ceasefire.

Beyond emergency response

64. An inter-agency plan of action was drawn up to systematically address the life-saving requirements of the war-affected population of Kisangani for the first 100 days. This plan included identification of internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups in need of food assistance, medical attention and psychological support, as well as supplying essential items such as engine oil and parts for the hydroelectrical station and water-supply system.

65. The humanitarian community is currently planning activities that move beyond the emergency phase of the first 100 days. If the Kisangani demilitarization plan takes firm root, it will allow a humanitarian space, 90 km in diameter, to be created in the town and its vicinity for the first time since the two-year war began.

66. Meanwhile the displaced populations who are living along the five main axis roads outside Kisangani remain unconvinced by the demilitarization plan, including the withdrawal of foreign troops, and refuse to return to their homes. However, with the humanitarian agencies working closely with civil society in the transition phase, a more conducive environment should emerge. During the six days of conflict in Kisangani, the civilian population rallied to help those less fortunate by offering food and shelter to those displaced by the fighting. This phase of the war made residents realize the extent to which they were ill-prepared, having no contingency supplies and powerless to prevent being targeted during the fighting. These feelings of vulnerability and humiliation continue to induce fear and panic in the population, despite the demilitarization of the town.

67. Kisangani emerges as an opportunity to strengthen the population's capacity not only to overcome the trauma brought about by a war fought in the city by foreign troops, but also to address the general uncertainty and economic hardship that has been a way of life for over two years. The challenge for the humanitarian community, both international and national, remains the integration of emergency assistance and capacity-enforcing initiatives that promote sustainable peace in a militarily unstable environment.

68. The international community's response to the hostilities in Kisangani helped to further strengthen links with civil society and local administration. These partnership arrangements and support to local initiatives are helping to improve social, welfare and economic conditions for the population. The Church is one of the traditional pillars of Congolese society and in the absence of the State has been involved in supporting 80 per cent of primary schools and providing primary medical care throughout the country. Close partnership must be developed with the international community to develop a wide range of projects to move beyond the current emergency phase.

69. The existence of a strong civil society, including a large number of national non-governmental organizations, is a characteristic feature of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. National non-governmental organizations are present in Kisangani and in even the remotest parts of the country. While the war has curtailed their potential, the indigenous social structures remain a valuable asset for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and for future rehabilitation programmes to develop self-sufficiency and sustainability. During the six-day war in Kisangani, national groups and organizations clearly demonstrated

their ability to take responsibility and mount a credible response, working with international bodies.

70. While much attention has been focused on the tragedy in Kisangani, it is important not to ignore the large-scale suffering of the rest of the population in the east and other parts of the country. The continuing and increased suffering of many people is the result of a combination of factors, including renewed fighting, increasing impoverishment and continuing ethnic hatred. The attempts being made in Kisangani by the international community in collaboration with national non-governmental organizations and civil society can be viewed as a pilot scheme which could be replicated in other parts of the country when access and resource availability improves.

71. Agencies in Kisangani are currently considering shortening the duration of emergency humanitarian assistance by seeking increased funding of rehabilitation and recovery activities without waiting for a durable peace to be in place. This has been prompted in part by logistical constraints. Indeed the cost of flying in humanitarian supplies is prohibitively expensive and impossible to envisage even in the medium term. Sustainable, local solutions must therefore be developed. WFP is currently exploring the possibilities of purchasing food supplies locally, to reduce costs and stimulate the agricultural sector.

72. For the international community working with civil society the emphasis is on the post-crisis context, promoting rehabilitation, expanding basic services to more people, and attempting to tackle the root causes of poverty and exclusion. It is hoped that this will be the foundation for the reconstruction of governance, law and order, social cohesion and participation and rehabilitation of the economy from micro to macro levels.

73. Despite the precarious situation, Kisangani is well placed to test new and imaginative ways to establish a comprehensive transitional approach, to move away from emergency relief by integrating humanitarian and reconstruction programmes at the earliest possible opportunity. A transitional medium-term plan has been drawn up by the international agencies in collaboration with civil society and local authorities. It includes food-for-work programmes to assist the social sector (health centres and schools), substituting temporary relief assistance for school and medical fees.

74. This approach aims to embrace activities directed at alleviating physical suffering (emergency food and medical assistance) and protecting fundamental human rights. It involves not only addressing the immediate crisis but also building local institutional and societal means to minimize future crises, reducing the vulnerability of the civilian population by reducing their dependence on humanitarian assistance, and seeking to build on their capacities for sustainable livelihood.

75. The international community's firm stance in promoting the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement with the assistance of MONUC and through the demilitarization of Kisangani will help to bring an end to the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUC monitoring of the political and security situation in Kisangani and its environs is essential to determine the limits of operational modalities for agencies.

Appendix

Terms of reference of the Kisangani evaluation mission

1. A meeting of concerned departments and agencies this afternoon has reached provisional agreement on the terms of reference of the Kisangani evaluation mission. These are focused primarily on paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 1304 (2000), and are as follows. The mission should:

- Proceed to Kisangani to assess the damage there and to evaluate the overall situation, including long-term reconstruction and rehabilitation aspects;
- Make a preliminary assessment of the loss of life and property damage caused in the recent fighting;
- Determine, in close coordination with MONUC, whether the United Nations should assist the population of Kisangani in other areas and, if so, how it should do so;
- Propose measures, in close coordination with MONUC, to follow up the mission's visit;
- Submit a report to the Secretary-General with proposals for recommendations he might make to the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1304 (2000).

2. The mission leader, Omar Bakhet, will now conduct consultations to determine the membership of the team. Participants in the meeting agreed that the expertise of their counterparts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo would be at his disposal.

3. It is envisaged that the mission would visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo on or about 15 August, and would submit its report by the end of August. The mission may also decide to visit Kigali and Kampala.

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